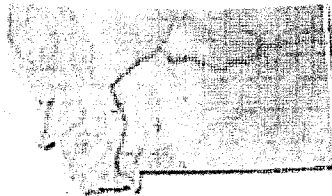


1601 2nd Avenue, North
Suite 601
Great Falls, MT 59401



MISSOURI RIVER CONSERVATION DISTRICTS COUNCIL

EXHIBIT 6
DATE 1-17-11
HB Section C
Phone: (406) 454-0056

mrcdc@MissouriRiverCouncil.info
www.MissouriRiverCouncil.info

Mission: *Represent natural resource and environmental interests
on the Missouri River and the associated uplands.*

Authorization - Conservation Districts (CDs) are authorized by MT State Law, Title 76, Chapter 15 to preserve natural resources, control floods, prevent impairment of dams and reservoirs, preserve wildlife, protect the tax base, protect public lands, and protect and promote the health, safety, and general welfare of the people of MT.

BACKGROUND

- **Who/What** - Collaboration of 15 CDs from 14 counties bordering the Missouri River in MT. Members include a Supervisor from each CD plus representation from MT Assn of CDs, MT DNRC, and U.S. NRCS.
- **Where/When** - The MT reach of the Missouri River is 725 miles from the headwaters at Three Forks northeast to the ND border; is MT's largest geographic feature; joins with more than 15 tributaries; contains 9 dams, 1 Nat'l Monument, 2 Nat'l Wildlife Refuges, 1 Reservation, and 3 endangered species. The Council formed in 2000.
- **Why** - Maintain relationships with Federal and State agencies, work with landowners and local stakeholders to ensure a grassroots base to land use decisions and stewardship, collaborate on specific local issues and projects, and represent Montana's Missouri River CDs throughout the entire 10-state Missouri River basin and nationally.

***Benefit to Montana** - Collective voice of 15 conservation districts working through
Cooperation, Advisory Capacity, and Education to preserve natural resources and sustainable agriculture,
while protecting the local tax base and public lands.*

ACTIVITIES (Sample)

- **Cooperation:** Developing addendum to \$50,000,000 Missouri-Madison CREP (Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program), of which \$10,000,000 is match from PPL MT, to make the program more suitable for MT producers and encourage enrollment.
- **Advisory Capacity:** Represent MT CDs on Missouri River Recovery Implementation Committee, 8-state committee authorized under Water Resources Development Act of 2007. Formed to guide prioritization, implementation, monitoring, evaluation and adaptation of recovery actions and ensure that public values are incorporated in the Missouri River Ecosystem Recovery Plan (Army Corp of Engineer, US Fish & Wildlife Service).
- **Cooperation:** Formed and oversee Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge Community Working Group, where diverse interests convene to discuss management of the refuge and work to ensure vitality of both CMR NWR and surrounding communities.
- **Education:** Working through partnerships and collaboration to reduce aquatic invasive species establishment and spread, specifically Eurasian Water Milfoil, potentially a multi-million dollar problem to the state of MT.

Gallatin Conservation District
Broadwater Conservation District
Lewis & Clark Conservation District
Cascade County Conservation District
Chouteau County Conservation District

Blaine County Conservation District
Big Sandy Conservation District
Fergus County Conservation District
Petroleum County Conservation District
Phillips Conservation District

Garfield County Conservation District
Valley County Conservation District
McCone Conservation District
Roosevelt County Conservation District
Richland County Conservation District

Working together to improve the Missouri River Watershed...



MISSOURI RIVER
CONSERVATION DISTRICTS
COUNCIL

① Cleaning Up Recreation Areas

In June 2009, the Council and 34 volunteers retrieved more than 10,000 pounds of trash and abandoned boat docks from **Holter Lake**, a popular reservoir along the Missouri River. The cleanup, a cooperative effort involving local cabin owners, recreators, the BLM, and the Council, was the first of its kind on Holter Lake. Additional cleanups are planned; visit the Council website to learn how you can help.

② Engaging Students in Riparian Restoration

In the 1950s, many areas of the Missouri River were armored with car bodies to control erosion. In 2008, the Council worked with the Sun River Watershed and landowners to remove **23,000 pounds of material**, including 10 car bodies and 2 truck loads of trash, from the riverbank near Great Falls. The Council then sponsored 7th graders from Holy Spirit Catholic School to install erosion control matting and plant willows. For their efforts, the students earned a first-place \$50,000 prize in the national "Eco-Challenge" competition. Our congratulations to them!



③ Solving Stormwater Problems

Whitmore Ravine, a normally-dry gully, has been receiving stormwater and diverted groundwater runoff from Malmstrom Air Force Base since the 1950s. The water has caused the erosion of more than **470,000 tons of sediment** from the ravine into the Missouri River, creating a delta that extends halfway

across the river channel. In 2009, after 10 years of discussion, the Conservation District, landowners, and Air Force agreed on a formal plan to stop the erosion. The Council is working with all partners to obtain project funding for the agreed-upon erosion control plan.



④ Emphasizing the History of Conservation

The 2001 Presidential Proclamation that created the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument states that "The area has remained largely unchanged" since the Lewis and Clark's epic journey. In a nod of respect to the early settlers and their descendants, the Bureau of Land Management, local Conservation Districts,

and the Council collaborated on the documentary film "**Pride and Perseverance**" to tell the families' stories. Their heritage of hard work, respect for the land and water, and dedication to their rural communities have sustained the Breaks area for future generations. The film aired on Montana PBS and is available at www.giftmontana.com.

⑤ Raising the Grassroots Voice in Public Land Management

Montana is home to 730 miles of the Missouri River, half of which are impacted by federal management. Beginning at Fort Benton, the Bureau of Land Management manages the Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument. The Charles M. Russell National Wildlife Refuge, managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, extends from the Monument to the Fort Peck Dam, which is managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. The Council is actively involved with all agencies, encouraging better partnerships with landowners. Success stories like the Beartooth Wildlife Management Area, are used as a model for agency-landowner relations. **"Years ago we didn't want a Wildlife Management Area next to us, now we consider them one of our best neighbors."** – Scott Blackman, MRCDC member and landowner next to the Beartooth WMA.



⑥ Helping Landowners Adjust to Changes

Along Montana's lower reach of the Missouri River, operation of the **Fort Peck Dam** creates fluctuating flows that deposit sediment throughout the river corridor, often plugging and disabling the 155 irrigation pump sites along the river bank. Roosevelt and Richland County Conservation Districts, area landowners, and state and federal agencies designed, built, and permitted a dredge that turns the sediment into a harmless slurry that is redeposited along sandbars and banks, creating habitat for endangered bird species.



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PHOTOS BY JOHN CHASE, JIM BECK,
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